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PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS IN KANSAS CITIES

Compiled and mimeographed by
THE MUNICIPAL REFERENCE BUREAU
University Extension Division
University of Kansas
Lawrence, Kansas

BULLETIN NO. 26

June 1, 1921.



MUNICIPAL REFERENCE BUREAU

John G. Stutz, Ph.B., Secretary,
(Secretary and Treasurer,
League of Kansas Municipalities)

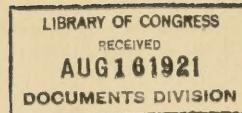
Annette Garrett, A.B. Assistant Secretary.

PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS IN KANSAS CITIES

A Report on Parks and Playgrounds in Kansas Cities
Containing Information Secured Through a
Questionnaire filled out by the
City Clerk of each city.

Compiled and Analyzed
by
Annette Garrett, Assistant Secretary,
Municipal Reference Bureau.

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A REPORT ON PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS IN KANSAS.

The following report is compiled in the interest of municipal progress. The information that has been collected from representative cities all over the state should be thoughtfully considered, not only by all city officials, but also by citizens, who, after all, determine their cities' policies.

The inspiration for this bulletin was an inquiry from a Chamber of Commerce, asking the number of parks in Kansas. We were unable to supply this information, and, realizing that this question warranted intensive study on our part, we sent the following questionnaire to every city clerk in the state:

1. How many acres of municipal parks does your city have? _____
2. How many animals are kept in the park? _____
3. Are your parks centrally located with reference to population?
4. Do you consider your park system adequate?
5. Have you planned to increase your park system to meet your increase in population?
6. What is the cost per year for park maintenance?
7. How many Comfort Stations are maintained by the City?
8. Do you conduct playgrounds? _____ How many? _____ What months? _____
9. How many supervisors do you employ?
10. During what hours is the playground supervised?
11. What equipment do you have?
12. How many children make use of the playground?
13. Do you have any provision for public recreation during the winter months? What is its character? (Volley ball, basket ball, swimming, skating, etc.)

The response to this questionairre was most pleasing. And it is to the co-operation of the city clerks that the reader should direct his thanks and appreciation for without their interest this material could not have been successfully compiled. We received answers from all but one of the cities of the first class, from all but sixteen of the cities of the second class, and from over half of the cities of the third class. It may be safely assumed that the majority of those not replying, particularly of the cities of the third class, have no park.

The interest displayed leads one to expect progress in the way of park improvement within the near future. Particularly gratifying is the interest displayed by very small cities. In reviewing the figures from the small cities, and in consideration of the long list that report no park, one must remember the difficulty that western Kansas meets when it attempts that most essential to parks, the planting of shade trees. There, where the problem of planting a tree is quite aside from that of having it grow, it takes patient nursing to bring the newly planted park through its first summers and constant care thereafter.

An analysis of the figures given below reveals some of the following facts. The cities of the first class, with a total park acreage of 1393, average 366 persons per acre. The cities of the second class, with a total acreage of 944 acres, average 302 persons per acre. The cities of the third class, with a total acreage of 547 acres, average 239 persons per acre. Separating the cities of the second class into those having a population under 5000, and those having a population over 5000, the former average 253 persons per acre, and the latter average 355 persons per acre.

Let us now see how these figures compare with individual cities outside of Kansas. Kansas City, Mo., according to the Park Report for 1919, had 2563 acres of parks, with an average of 126 persons per acre. Philadelphia (figured based on 1917 report) had 6073 acres of parks, with an average of 300 persons per acre. Cleveland, in 1920, had 2400 acres, with an average of 333 persons per acre. Spokans, Washington, was in the lead in 1915 with a total of 1943 acres, or 62 persons per acre. Minneapolis, followed closely with 75 persons per acre, while Detroit in 1915 had one acre of park for every 492 persons.

Turning now to the cost of maintenance per capita and per acre, we find that cities of the first class average 25¢ per capita, and \$113.31 per acre. Cities of the second class spend 10¢ per capita, and \$42.06 per acre. Cities of the third class average 7¢ per capita, and \$17.10 per acre. (Note that few cities actually have as low as 7¢ per person if they have a maintenance fund at all. The average is pulled down by the large number that report no park fund). Cities of the second class with a population under 5000 spend an average of 9¢ per capita and \$24.00 per acre, while those with a population over 5000 average 18¢ per capita and \$62.00 per acre.

Again comparing these figures, we find that Kansas City, Mo., in 1919, reported a cost of \$1.48 per capita and \$187.00 per acre. Philadelphia, in 1917, reported the cost of maintenance at 45¢ per capita, and \$123.00 per acre. Cleveland, for 1920, had a per capita cost of 50¢ and spent \$166.00 per acre. Spokane, Washington, in 1915, had a per capita cost of 66¢ and a per acre cost of \$41.68. In Minneapolis, in 1915, the cost of maintenance per capita was 41¢ and the cost per acre \$30.48. Detroit spent, in 1915,

74 $\frac{1}{2}$ per capita, and \$364.46 per acre of park.

In Kansas the average number of acres for cities of the second class with a population of over 5000 is 27 and the average total cost of maintenance is \$1,634.00. The average number of acres for cities of the second class with a population of less than 5000 is 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ acres, with \$253.00 for maintenance cost.

The answers to the question, "Do you consider your park system adequate?" may be summed up as follows: Of the cities of the first class, five answer no, four yes, and one failed to answer. Of the cities of the second class, 26 answered no, 23 yes, and 15 did not answer the question. Of the cities of the third class, 52 answered no (exclusive of those having no park) 58 yes, and 10 did not answer.

Thirty-one cities reported comfort stations. Fifteen of the cities of the first and second class report a park plan for the future, or a park system. Fourteen cities of the third class report that they are planning to increase their parks to meet their increase in population, making a total of 29 with future plans for their parks. The large number of cities that are leaving the future to take care of itself in the way of parks is unfortunate. Particularly is the very small town losing a great opportunity in not getting land now while it is yet obtainable in desirable places. The first question to ask when considering a park is, "Do we intend to grow?" In a comparatively new and sparsely settled state like Kansas most cities must inevitably grow. Many cities today are suffering from the lack of foresight of the city officials of 20 years ago. Are we willing to let the next generation suffer from our lack of foresight? Trees planted now will make shade for the next generation.

A PARK REPORT OF CITIES IN KANSAS

CITIES OF THE FIRST CLASS

Name of City	Pop.	Acres	Per-sons per A.	Cost main-tain-ance cap-ita	per fed acre	Report-ed ade-quate	Com-fort Sta-tions	Plans for fu-ture	Remarks
Atchison	12,630								
Coffeyville	13,552	32	42	\$3500	.26	no	1	no	
Fort Scott	10,693	150	71	1683	.15	no	none	yes	20 animals
Hutchinson	23,298	20	1165	2-5000	.12	no	none	yes	
Kansas City	101,177	300	357	48000	.46	yes	4	yes	
Leavenworth	16,981	nc		none		no	none	no	
Parsons	16,028	60	266	1000	.06	yes	none	no	
Pittsburg	18,052	64	283	8000	.48	yes	none	yes	
Salina	15,085	150	100	5000	.33	N.R.	1	yes	
Topeka	50,022	227 ¹ ₂	220	38665	.77	no	7	yes	111 animals
Wichita	72,128	390	180	50000	.69	yes	N.R.	yes	45 animals and 65 birds

CITIES OF THE SECOND CLASS

Abilene	4,895	10	489	500	.10	yes	none	no	
Anthony	2,435	6	405	100	.09	no	none	no	
Arkans. City	11,253	20	562	5998	.53	yes	1	yes	2 A. Lake for skating
Augusta	4,219	1 ¹ ₂	3275	25	.05	no	1	no	
Baxter Spgs.	1,343	2 ¹ ₂	53	N.R.		yes	N.R.	no	
Belleview	2,215	2	1108	none		no	none	no	
Beloit	3,241	40	61	5-600	.15-18	no	none	no	
Bonner Spgs.	1,541	nc							Small city park situated on hill side.
Burlington	2,251	50	45	1500	.66	yes	n ne	yes	
Caldwell	2,191	15	146	200	.19	no	none	no	

* Several pieces of vacant ground formed by street intersections and the streets of 100 ft. each, one along the river, all sown in blue grass and kept up by the city for children.

Cities of Second Class Continued.

Name of city	Pop.	Soc. sec.	Per cent per A.	Cost minimum per tenant's cap. ity	Repor- tate	Com- plies with	Jans- cu- re	Remarks
Chenette	10,286	40	256	2000. .19	yes	1	no	
Cherryvale	4,325	10	432	1000. .23	yes	no	no	
Chetopa	1,899	none						
Clay Center	3,715	12	309	1000. .26 no record	yes	1	no	
Columbus	3,078	7	439		no	none	no	
Concordia	5,229	10	522	1200. .22	no	1	no	
Council Grove	2,405	34	70	none	yes	1	no	Tourist Camp
Dodge City	5,065	22	230	2500. .49	no	none	yes	
El Dorado	10,995	5	2199	N.R.	N.R.	none	N.R.	
Emporia	11,273	4	2318	2500. .22	yes	none	no	
Fredonia	3,954	40	88	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	
Galena	5,926	no				1		
Garden City	3,016	100	30	N.R.	yes	1	no	Recently acquired not yet developed
Garnett	1,999	4	499	N.R.	no	1	no	
Girard	2,917	no						
Great Bend	4,823	1	2411	1000. .267	no	none	yes	
Harper	1,458	no						
Hays	2,339	no						State prison outside of cit.
Herington	4,255	1	607	none	no	none	no	
Hiawatha	2,878	2	1439	.25. .009	no	none	no	
Holton	2,666	no						
Humboldt	2,131	2	1065	300. .14	yes	1	no	

Cities of second class continued.

Name of city	pop.	Ac- res	Per- sons per A.	Cost main- tenance	Cost per capita	Report- able ade- quate	Com- fort sta- tions	Plans for fu- ture	Remarks
Independ.	11,920	114	105	5000.	.42	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	
Jola	8,513	5	1702	N.R.		no	N.R.	no	
Junc. City	7,516	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	3006	N.R.		yes	N.R.	no	
Kingman	2,253	40	56	600 un- known	.26	yes	none	no	
Kinsley	1,794	2	897			no	none	no	Also Tourist camp and Fair Grounds
LaMarpe	1,182	$\frac{1}{2}$	2364	none		yes	none	no	
Larned	2,900	5	590	600.	.24	no	none	no	
Lawrence	12,456	20	622	1200	.096	no	none	yes	
Liberal	2,314	no				N.R.	none	N.R.	
Lindsborg	2,123	6	580	N.R.		N.R.	none	no	
Lyons	2,516	6	419	N.R.		yes	1	no	
Manhattan	7,989	45	177	2000	.26	no	1	no	
Marion	1,951	1	1951	600	.30	yes	none	no	
Marysville	3,450	7	493	750	.22	no	none	no	2 comfort sta- tions to be built soon
Mifflinson	4,595	6	766	15-2300	.32-43	yes	1	N.R.	1 Buffalo, 7 deer
Miracopolis	1,822	15	129	200	.10	yes	none	no	
Mulberry	2,632	no				N.R.	none	no	
Noodesha	3,945	12 $\frac{1}{2}$	315	1358.	.30	no	none	no	
Newton	9,781	45	217	3500	.35	yes	3	yes	
Nickerson	1,167	no				N.R.	none	N.R.	
Norton	1,513	no				N.R.	none	N.R.	Park owned by Agric. Assoc.

Cities of second class continued.

Name of city	Pop.	Acres	Per sons per A.	Cost main- tenance	per cap- ita	Report ed ade- quate	Com- fort sta- tions	Plans for fut- ure	Remarks
Olathe	3,335	no				N.R.	none	N.R.	
Osage City	2,823	17 $\frac{3}{4}$	163	un- known		no	none	yes	14 A. undevel- oped.
Osawatomie	3,870	no				N.R.	none	N.R.	
Osborne	1,601	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	355	300	.18	no	1	no	
Oswego	2,258	15	150	none		yes	none	no	\$1700 in Public Park fund but not being used
Ottawa	9,018	65	138	N.R.		yes	1	no	
Paola	3,592	30	113	1000	.29	yes	1	no	
Pratt	5,111	1	5111	none		no	none	no	
Rosedale	7,674	no				N.R.	no	N.R.	Park recently donated but not used.
Sabotha	1,856	6	232	none		yes	1	no	
Scammon	2,364	no				N.R.	none	N.R.	
Seneca	1,961	no				N.R.	no	no	
Sterling	2,214	no				N.R.	no	N.R.	
Stockton	1,291	no				N.R.	no	N.R.	
Weir	2,159	no				N.R.	no	N.R.	
Winfield	7,935	18	440	250	.03	no	2	yes	

Note: To save space, those cities of the third class which reported no park are not listed.

CITIES OF THE THIRD CLASS.

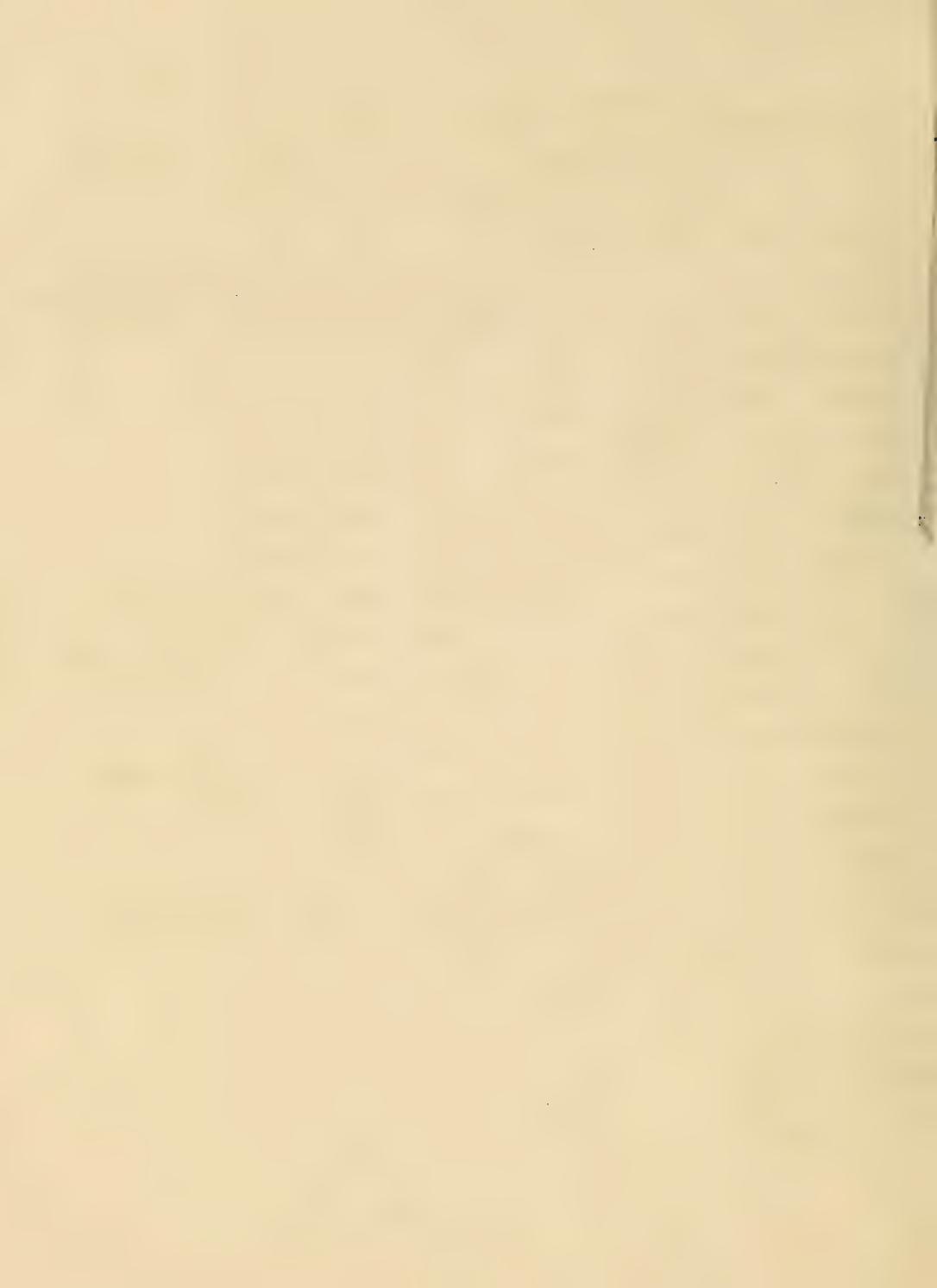
Name of city	Pop.	Ac- res	Per sons per A.	Cost main- tenance per cap- ita	Report- ed ade- quate	Com- fort sta- tions	Plans for fut- ure	Remarks
Allen	311	1	77	75.	.21	no	none	yes
Americus	462	2	168	N.R.		yes	none	no
Argonia	450	5	90	200.	.44	yes	none	no
Arlington	465	no				no	none	yes
Arma	1,792	2	896	none		no	none	no Building a Com- munity building in park
Aurora	260					no	none	yes
Beattie	478	$\frac{1}{2}$	956	N.R.		no	none	N.R.
Belle Blaine	617	$5\frac{1}{2}$	150	N.R.		no	none	no
Barnes	417	5	83	200.	.44	yes	none	no
Belpre	411	2	105	unknown		yes	none	no
Bison	285	$2\frac{1}{2}$	114	none		yes	none	yes Park not much used plan to develop soon
Blue Rapids	326	25	53	200.	.15	yes	2	no
Brookville	261	2	130	30.	.11	yes	none	no
Bucklin	778	$5\frac{1}{2}$	222	200.	.25	yes	none	N.R.
Buffalo	726	$\frac{1}{2}$	290	small		no	none	N.R.
Burden	410	20	20	$\frac{1}{2}$ mill		N.R.	N.R.	N.R. Park contains Community bld. G.A. woods, $\frac{1}{2}$ miles racetrack
Burlingame	1,474	35	42	500	.34	yes	1	yes
Canton	659	6	109	90.	.13	yes	none	yes
Carbondale	456	3	152	100.	.22	yes	none	no

Cities of 5,000 or less continued.

Name of city	Pop.	Acres	Per cent per A.	Min- terance per capita	Report for ade- quate	Com- fort sta- tions	Plans for fur- ture	Remarks
Cowherd City	840	4	216	100	12	yes	1	no
Chase	252	2	126	100	39	yes	none	no
Cheney	662	10	66	100	15	yes	none	no
Clayton	610	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	244	50	382	yes	none	no
Clearwater	630	6	175	N.R.		yes	none	no
Clyde	1,211	5	305	30	30002	yes	none	no
Colony	504	6	68	200	39	yes	none	no
Culver	356	2	178	150	42	yes	none	yes
Deerfield	212	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	84	N.R.		yes	none	N.R.
Delphos	879	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	351	N.R.		N.R.	N.R.	N.R.
Dighton	272	5	54	N.R.		N.R.	N.R.	N.R.
Enterprise	779	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	311	300.	38	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.
Eskridge	808	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	323	200.	24	yes	none	yes
Eudora	624	10	62	25.	104	no	none	no
Everest	416	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	166	50.	12	yes	none	no
Fairview	413	5	82	75.	18	yes	none	no
Florence	1,258	5	251	$\frac{1}{2}$ mill		no	none	yes
Fowler	490	5	98	none		no	none	yes
Garfield	320	10	32	1200.	3.75	yes	none	no
Greencastle	291	$\frac{1}{4}$	1164	100.	34	no	none	no
Gypsum	639	2	319	N.R.		no	none	no

Cities of third class continued.

Name of city	Pop.	Acres	Per sons per A.	Cost main tenance cap ita	Report ed addi tional quota	Com fort sta tions	Plans for firs t-class	Remarks
Halstead	1,040	18	57	150.	.14 yes	4	no	Halstead is well supplied with parks, easily accessible and with natural scenery; a \$7000 dam in the Little Arkansas river creates good boating.
Haven	545	2	272	50. un known	.091 yes	none	yes	
Havensville	335	1	335	un known	no	none	no	
Highland	737	1	737	un known	yes	none	no	
Howard	1,060	3	360	N.R.	yes	none	no	
Huron	216	2½	86	50.	.21 yes	none	no	
Jewell	775	1½	561	50.	.067 yes	none	no	
Kensington	608	5	121	100.	.16 yes	none	no	Park set in shade
Lane	323	2	430		yes	none	no	trees
Le Roy	773	10	77	N.R.	no	none	no	City Marshal's duty to care for park.
Lewis	412	3	137	N.R.	no	none	no	
Lincolnville	258	2	129	N.R.	N.R.	none	no	Park donated, city keeps up
Lost Springs	261	5	52	100.	.38 yes	none	no	
Louisville	231	10	20	100.	.43 yes	none	no	
Macksville	723	2½	361	N.R.	no	none	no	Park purchased and
Mahaska	201	4	50	50.	and kept up by donations and public subscription.	Unimproved except for trees planted.	no	
Marquette	251	2½	350	85.	.11 no	none	no	
McLvern	415	10	41	200	.48 yes	none	no	
Meridian	471	5	185	10.	.021 no	none	no	
Miltonvale	912	10	91	200.	.27 yes	none	no	
Moran	685	11	62					



Cities of the third class continued.

Name of city	Pop.	Ac- res	Per- sons per A.	Cost main- te- nance	per cap- ita	Report- ed ad- quate	Com- fort sta- tions	Plans for fut- ure	Remarks
Morrill	533	1 1/3	400	100.	.19	yes	1	no	
Mound Valley	888	not given				N.R.	none	no	
Mount Hope	516	1 1/2	412	N.R.		N.R.	none	N.R.	
Muscotah	465	2 1/2	186	N.R.		N.R.	none	N.R.	
Meosho Falls	536	2	268	N.R.		no	none	no	
Neosho Rapids	321	5	64	N.R.		N.R.	none	no	
New Cambria	185	not given							Two lots, band stand
Norcaratur	398	8	49	N.R.		no	none	no	Ball ground, 500 ornamental trees
Norwich	432	5	86	none		no	none	no	planted. Park purchased by cit.
Oakley	542	2 1/2	216	none		no	none	no	
Parkerville	172	1	172	25.	.14	yes	none	no	
Pleasanton	1516	3	505	none		yes	1	no	
Pomona	467	2	233	none		no	none	no	Trees recently planted and growing
Portis	321	1	321	400.	1.24	no	1	yes	
Protection	721	2 1/2	288	100.	.13	no	none	no	
Ramona,	259	3	86	150	.58	yes	none	no	
Randall	638	5	87	N.R.		yes	none	no	
Randolph	663	7	51	150	.41	yes	none	no	
Reading	350	4	87	25.	.071	yes	none	no	
Redfield	255	2	127	40	.15	yes	none	no	
Republic	227	4	116	150	.35	yes	none	no	
Richmond	550	1	351	N.R.		no	none	no	

Cities of third class continued.

Name of city	Pop.	Acres	Per-sons per A.	Cost main-te-nance	per cap-ita	Report-ed ade-quacy	Com-fort sta-tions	Plans for fut-ure	Remarks
Sedgwick	673	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	269	N.R.		yes	none	no	
Simpson	290	5	58	none		yes	none	no	
Solomon	110	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	444	25.	.022	yes	none	no	
Spring Hill	540	2	270	N.R.		yes	none	no	
Stafford	728	5	345	750.	.43	yes	none	no	
St. Francis	498	2	249	N.R.		yes	none	no	
St. Marys	1,031	20	51	500.	.47	no	none	yes	
St. Paul	906	5	181	100	.11	no	1	no	
Sylvan Grove	555	3	185	none		no	none	no	No improvements
Tampa	210	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	84	none		no	none	no	Bark new, few trades
Thayer	512	5	102	25-250	24-40	yes	none	no	
Udall	323	1	323	none		yes	none	no	
Uniontown	273	9	32	50.	.47	no	none	no	
Wamego	1,572	15	104	1200	.76	yes	1	N.R.	
Waverly	689	10	68	50.	.72	yes	none	no	
Wellsville	735	2	367	none		no	none	no	
Wheaton	196	2	98	N.R.		yes	none	N.R.	
Whiting	390	2	125	N.R.		yes	none	no	
Wilsey	291	5	58	none		no	none	no	
Wilson	1,026	1	1026	none		no	none	no	
Winchester	457	2	228	15.	.032	no	none	no	
Windom	193	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	66	none		N.R.	none	no	No improvements.

The idea of a park as a place to go and sit on stiff benches and listen to a band concert once a week or let your eye rest upon round, oval, hexangular or octangular ornamental flower beds--- but beware lest your foot rest ever so lightly upon the neat little grass plots between narrow paths --- this idea of a park is rapidly disappearing. The number of parks that are equipped with play-ground apparatus is an indication of the tendency to regard parks as a place of active recreation rather than merely a pleasant spot to look upon.

The following cities reported SUPERVISED playgrounds:

Fort Scott, 3 supervisors, 4 playgrounds, year around.

Wichita, 11 supervisors, 5 playgrounds, year around.

Topeka, 3 supervisors, 13 assistants, 8 playgrounds, June, July, August.

Cawker City, 3 supervisors, 2 playgrounds, hours, 9-12 and 1-5, June, July, Aug.

Anthony, 1 supervisor, 1 playground, June, July, August.

Clay Center, 1 supervisor.

Hays, 1 supervisor, 1 playground, hours, 5 P.M. to 9 P.M. May to November.

Junction City, 1 supervisor, 1 playground, hours 8 A.M. till dark, April to Oct.

Lawrence, 1 supervisor, 2 playgrounds, afternoons 1-6 P.M. August to Sept.

Manhattan, 2 supervisors, 2 playgrounds, afternoons, June till Sept.

Newton, 2 supervisors, 3 playgrounds, 8:30-4:30.

Winfield, 2 supervisors, 5 playgrounds, 8 A.M. to 6 P.M. June to Sept.

The following cities, in addition to those reporting supervised playgrounds report playground apparatus in the park:

Coffeyville, Kansas City, Pittsburg, Salina, Arkansas City, Burlington,

Concordia, Humboldt, Le Roy.

The following cities reported playground apparatus in connection with the school grounds. However, this list is not complete as the question was not asked directly and probably many cities did not mention the school playgrounds:

<u>Cities of the Second Class</u>	<u>Cities of third class</u>	
Garnett		Frederick
Great Bend	Aurora	Galva
Marysville	Belle Plain	Goodland
McPherson	Bennington	Halstead
Neodesha	Beverly	Lehigh
Norton	Buhler	Longford
Osage City	Burns	McDonald
Osborne	Bushton	Oketo
Paola	Canton	Quenemo
<u>Cities of the third class</u>		
Alton	Chase	Quinter
Agenda	Chautauqua	St. Marys
Americus	Clyde	Simpson
Argonia	Coats	Spearville
Arma	Colony	Wamego
Arlington	Bilsworth	Wilson
	Englewood	Winchester
	Florence	Woodston

MUNICIPAL REFERENCE BUREAU BULLETINS

No.	Date
10. Electric Light and Power Rates in 182 Kansas Cities (Out of Print)	1918
11. Cities in Kansas having Municipal Lighting Systems (Corrected to date)	
12. Cities in Kansas having Municipal Water Works (Corrected to date)	
13. Tax Rates and Assessed Valuations in Kansas Cities	1919
14. The City Manager Plan of Municipal Government	1919
15. Chambers of Commerce and other Civic and Commercial Organizations of Kansas	1919
16. Officials of Kansas Cities	1919
17. The Government of Hays, Kansas	1919
18. Regulation of Traffic at Street Intersections in Kansas Cities	1919
19. Women's Relation to the City	1920.
20. A Report on Police Departments in Seventeen Kansas Cities of first and second class and Twenty-five out-of-state cities	1920
21. The Regulation of Billboards in Kansas Cities	1920
22. Officials of Kansas Cities	1920
23. Tax Rates and Assessed Valuations in Kansas Cities	1920
24. Electric Light and Power Rates in 259 Kansas Cities	1921
25. Water Rates in 161 Kansas Cities	1921
26. Parks and Playgrounds in Kansas	1921.
27. Salaries of City Clerks in Kansas	1921
28. City Officials in Kansas	1921



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